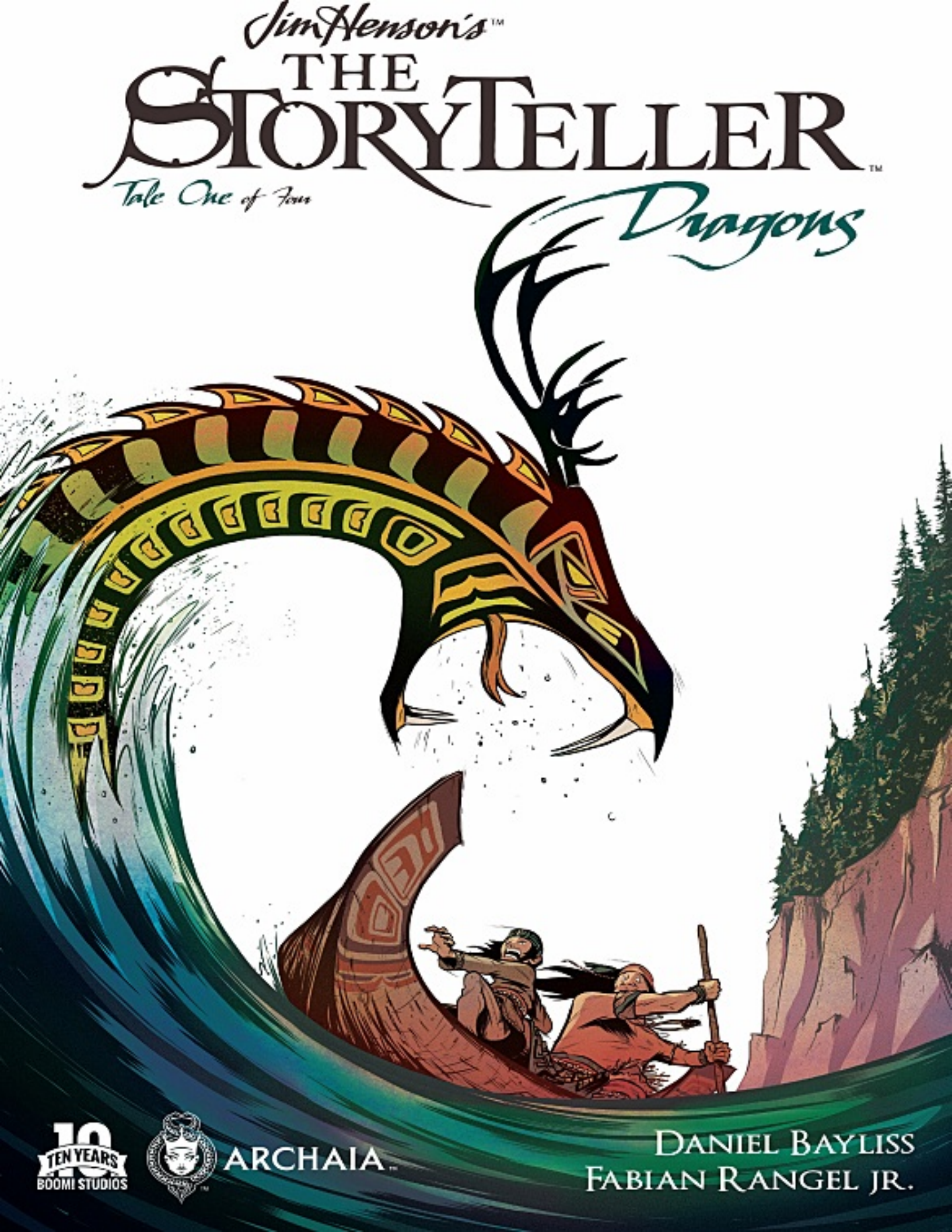
Jim Henson's™

THE STORYTELLER™

Tale One of Four

Dragons



TEN YEARS BOOM! STUDIOS

ARCHAIA™

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YUM.
THIS IS DELICIOUS.
YOU DON'T SAY--
OH, YES. INDEED, I DO.
GO ON, THEN! SEE FOR YOURSELF.
!
YES, NOT MANY THINGS HIT THE SPOT AS WELL AS A GOOD PIECE OF FRESH FISH.
AS A MATTER OF FACT--
MUNCH MUNCH
--I DO BELIEVE THAT REMINDS ME OF A STORY.

Many years ago, on the other side of the world--
--in a land as wild and untamed as can be--
--there was a *father* and his *son*.
PAY ATTENTION, SON.
BEFORE YOU KNOW IT, IT'LL BE *YOU* WHO NEEDS TO PROVIDE FOR YOUR *OWN* FAMILY.
I'M SORRY, FATHER.
Most fathers often struggle with being too hard or too soft on their children.
And *this* father was no exception.
But with just a wink--
--he could set his son's mind at ease.

FATHER, LOOK!
HMM. SOMETHING FRIGHTENED THEM.
US?
NO.
SOMETHING--
--BIGGER.

It takes a lot of food to feed a beast such as the Horned Serpent, and the father and his son looked considerably more filling than a school of fish.
Of course, the father wasn't just a fisherman--
--he was also a warrior.
Even so, this would most certainly be his final battle.
Luckily for him--
KRAKOOM

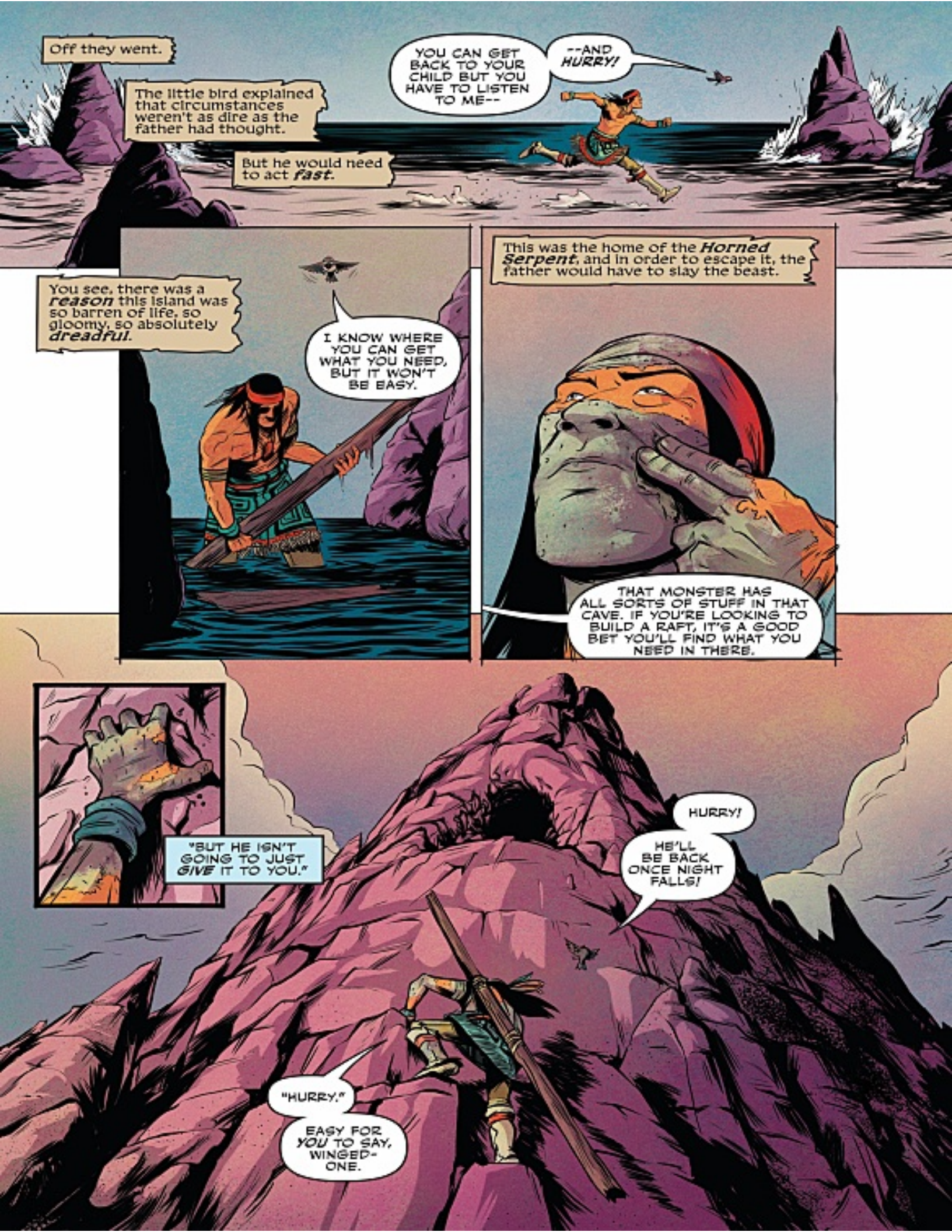
--help was on the way.
The *Thunderbirds*, natural enemies of the Horned Serpents, announced their fury with deafening shrieks.
SKREEEEEE
And a furious battle rarely seen by human eyes was underway!

CRASH BOOM ROAR!
THEIR BATTLE WAS TRULY SAVAGE.
AND THE THUNDERBIRDS STILL HAD TRICKS UP THEIR SLEEVES!
The father and son were helpless against the fury of the storm.
HOLD ON!
And then things got worse.
KA-KRAK

Sometimes we can be *so close* to something--
SON!
FATHER!
--but fate pulls it away from us and we can do little else but watch.
NO!
THAT BETTER *NOT* BE THE END.

Oh, no. Don't you worry, old friend.
There is still much to tell.
The son found himself stranded on a strange island.
F-FATHER?
He was scared. And alone.
FATHER!
Well, not *quite* alone.
Meanwhile, on another, stranger, more *unwelcoming* island--
--the *father* cursed his many gods.

It would have been rather easy to give into despair at this point, but both father and son held onto a small spark of hope.
A hope that would serve to guide them in the coming days.
Time passed, and the son was able to feed himself by remembering the lessons his father had taught him.
Lessons he was grateful for.
Still, the boy was much too young to be taking care of himself--
--so a concerned *sparrow* took it upon himself to do some investigating.
I KNEW IT!
HEY, WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU? YOU'RE NOT GIVING UP, ARE YOU?
NEVER. BUT THIS ISLAND IS BARREN. I CAN'T BUILD A RAFT WITH *THESE*.
THERE ARE NO ANIMALS TO HUNT.
THERE IS *NOTHING*.
MAYBE I SHOULD EAT *YOU!*
HEY!
DO THAT AND I WON'T BE ABLE TO TELL YOU HOW TO GET TO YOUR *SON*.
HE LIVES?
YOU--
--YOU'VE *SEEN* HIM?


Off they went.
The little bird explained that circumstances weren't as dire as the father had thought.
But he would need to act *fast*.
YOU CAN GET BACK TO YOUR CHILD BUT YOU HAVE TO LISTEN TO ME--
--AND *HURRY!*
You see, there was a *reason* this island was so barren of life, so gloomy, so absolutely *dreadful*.
I KNOW WHERE YOU CAN GET WHAT YOU NEED, BUT IT WON'T BE EASY.
This was the home of the *Horned Serpent*, and in order to escape it, the father would have to slay the beast.
THAT MONSTER HAS ALL SORTS OF STUFF IN THAT CAVE. IF YOU'RE LOOKING TO BUILD A RAFT, IT'S A GOOD BET YOU'LL FIND WHAT YOU NEED IN THERE.
"BUT HE ISN'T GOING TO JUST *GIVE* IT TO YOU."
HURRY!
HE'LL BE BACK ONCE NIGHT FALLS!
"HURRY."
EASY FOR *YOU* TO SAY, WINGED-ONE.

Night fell.
And with it, a silence the father had never experienced before.
And just as the Sparrow had predicted, the *Horned Serpent* rose from the black sea--
--to return to his ghastly den.
Then, with a belly empty of everything but *fury*, the father broke the silence with a *battle cry!*

It did *not* go unnoticed.

The father pushed and pushed with every ounce of strength he had left in his weakened body.

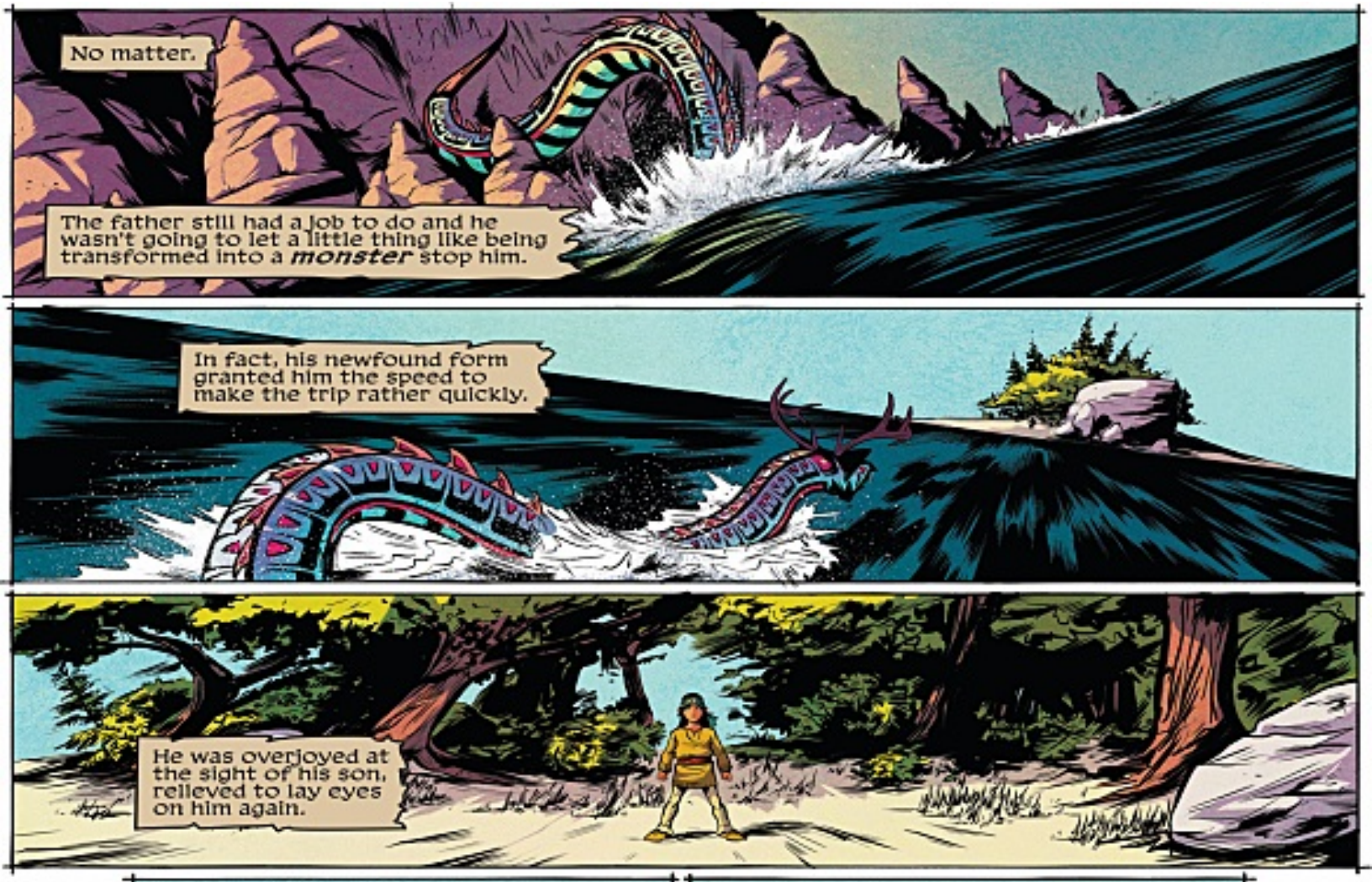
KREEEEEE!
KRACK

Completely exhausted and starving, the father knew there was only *one way* to get the sustenance his body would need to rescue his son.

And so a decision was made.

IT WASN'T LONG BEFORE THE FATHER HAD BUILT A WARM FIRE TO COOK HIS FIRST MEAL IN ALMOST A WEEK.
AFTER ALL, COOKED MEAT IS BETTER THAN RAW MEAT, EVEN IF IT COMES FROM A SERPENT.
EVEN I KNOW THAT.
The father ate and stared up at the stars, thinking of his son.
And on the other island, the son looked up at those same stars, hoping his father would come rescue him.
And that was *precisely* what the father was going to do, as soon as he got some rest.
He closed his eyes, anxious for the morning.

But when he awoke--
--let's just say, you *are* what you *eat*.
?!
The father tried to call out to his feathered friend, but all that came out was--
UH OH.
KREEEEEE!


No matter.
The father still had a job to do and he wasn't going to let a little thing like being transformed into a *monster* stop him.

In fact, his newfound form granted him the speed to make the trip rather quickly.

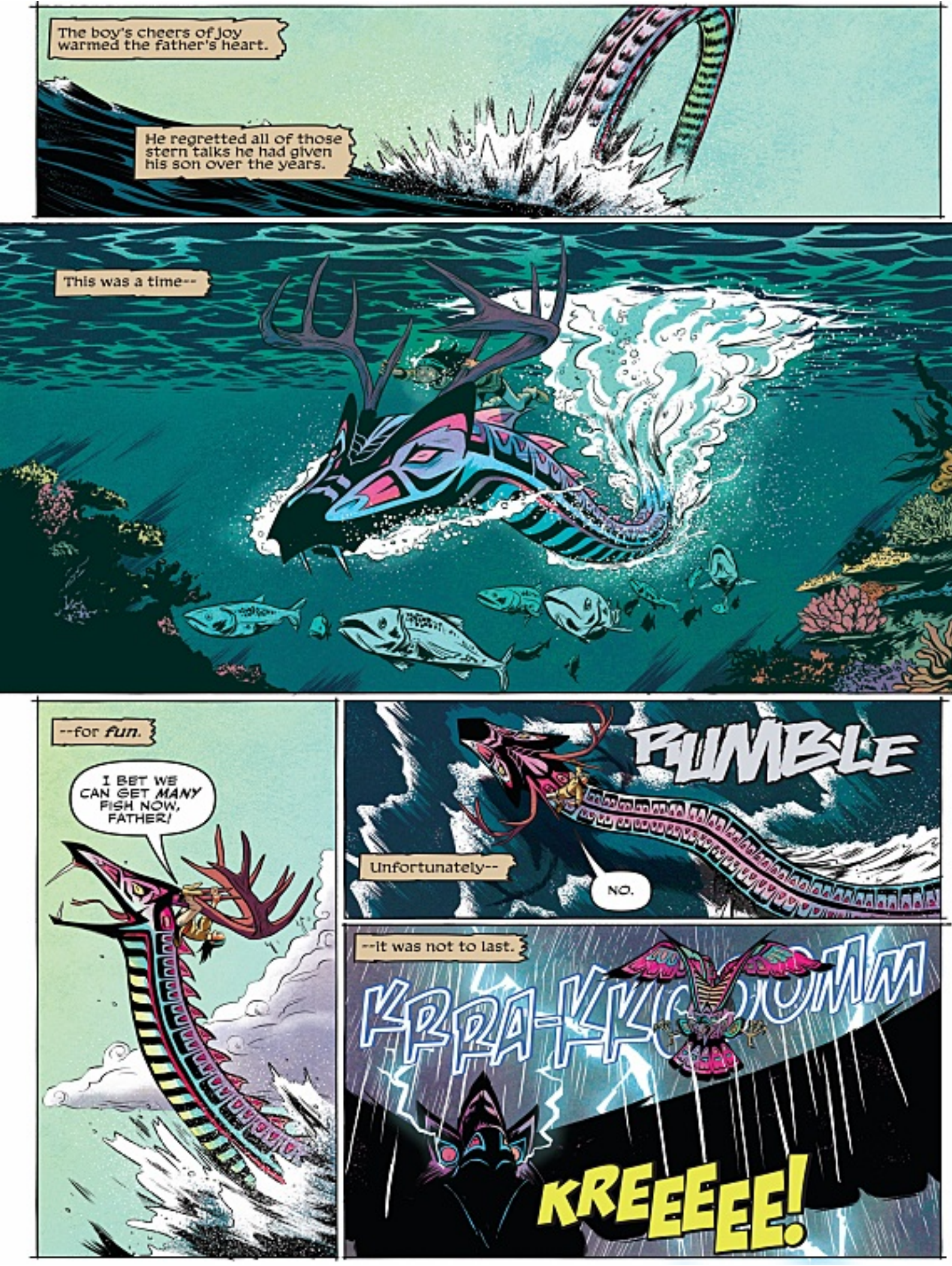
He was overjoyed at the sight of his son, relieved to lay eyes on him again.

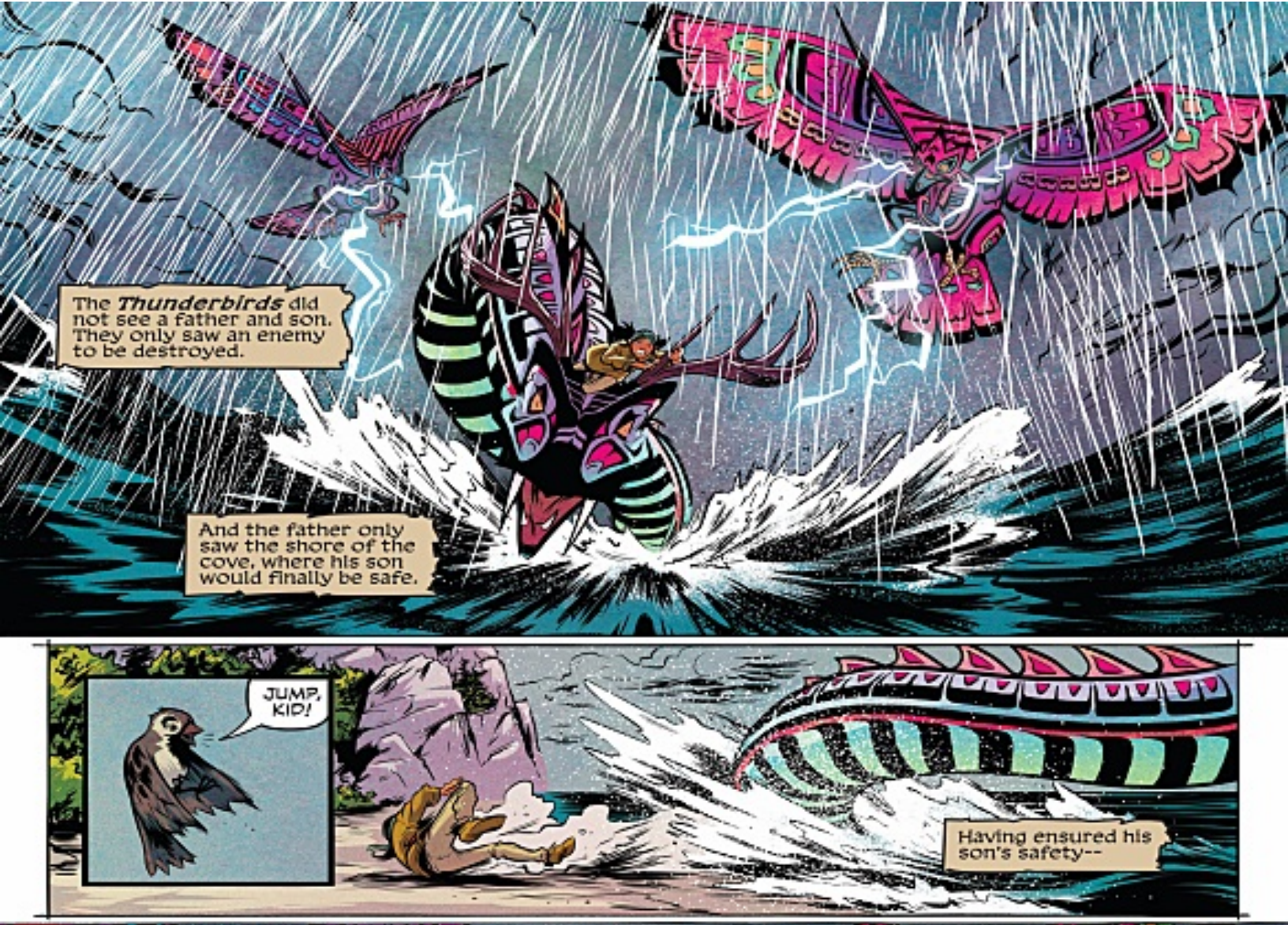
YOU!
The feeling was *not* mutual.

THIS IS ALL *YOUR* FAULT!

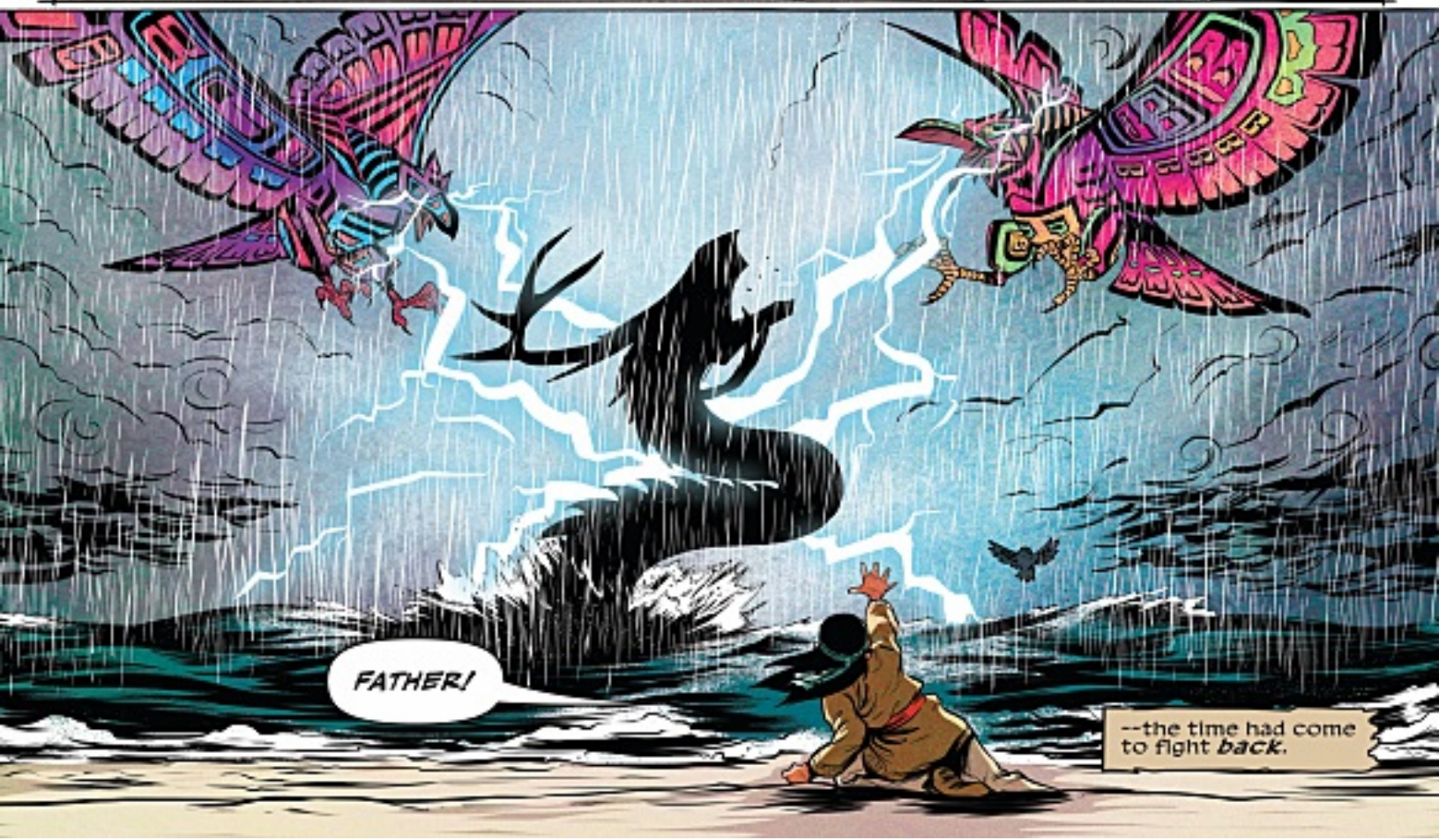
Even though the words weren't meant for him, they still cut the father deeply.
Unable to speak, the father tried to reassure his son--
--just as he had only a few days prior.
And hoped his son would understand.
...
FATHER?

I THINK IT'S TIME TO GO HOME, KID.
HOLD ON TIGHT!
KREEEEEEE!
Reunited at last, the father and son sped away from the island and towards home.


The boy's cheers of joy warmed the father's heart.
He regretted all of those stern talks he had given his son over the years.
This was a time--
--for *fun*.
I BET WE CAN GET *MANY* FISH NOW, FATHER!
RUMBLE
Unfortunately--
NO.
--it was not to last.
KRRA-KKOOWW
KREEEEEE!


The *Thunderbirds* did not see a father and son. They only saw an enemy to be destroyed.
And the father only saw the shore of the cove, where his son would finally be safe.

JUMP, KID!
Having ensured his son's safety--


FATHER!
--the time had come to fight *back*.

As the son watched the battle move further away from the shore--
--he was struck with a realization he would carry with him--
--for the rest of his days.
His father's love knew no bounds. Everything he had done, was for *him*.
For his survival, for his happiness.
Hours passed.
The son refused to take his eyes off the horizon, in hopes his father would return.
DID-- DID HE EVER SEE HIM AGAIN?
ONCE MORE--

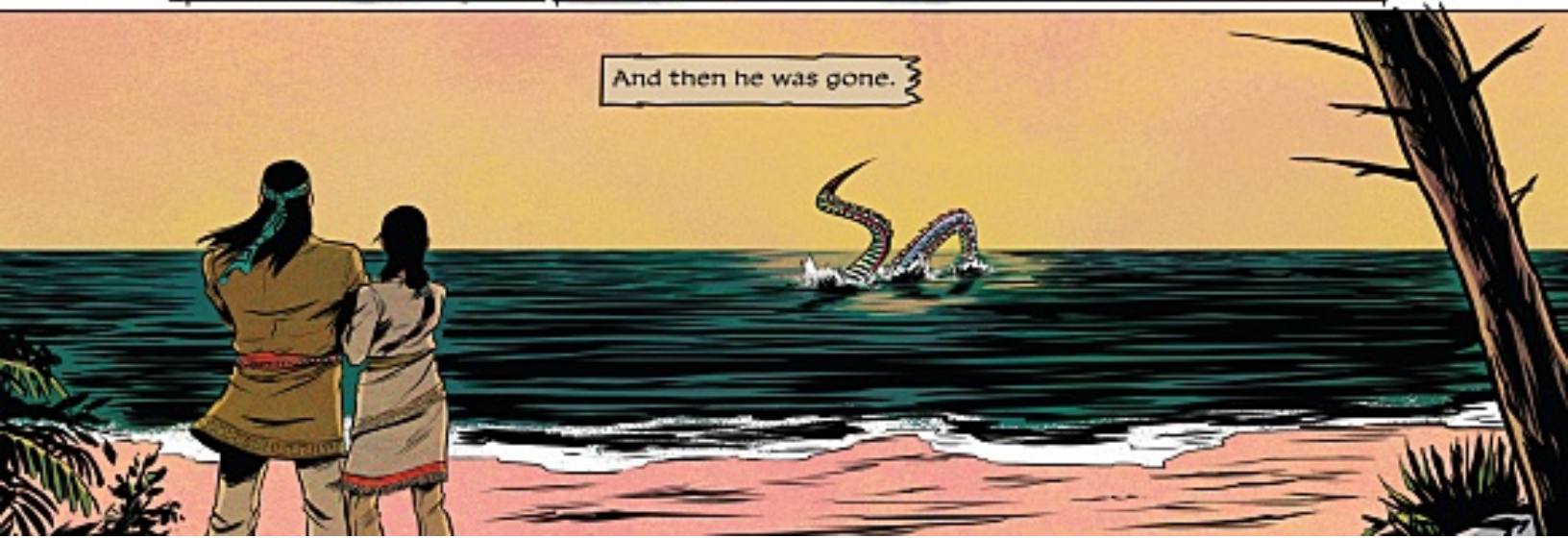
--many, *many* years later.

When the *son* had become a *father* himself.
He took his new family to the shore of the cove and hoped to catch a glimpse of his father.
To show him his *grandson*.

SLISH

The serpent had many battle scars from countless clashes with the *Thunderbirds*.
The son looked upon his face, wondering if any of his father was left in the monster before him.

And the father looked down at the fruit of the sacrifice he had made many years before.


And then he was gone.

THE END.
NOW YOU'VE GOT ME WONDERING WHAT *SERPENT* TASTES LIKE.
OH, YOU!
ALWAYS THINKING WITH YOUR STOMACH.
I'LL SATISFY YOUR CURIOSITY AND TELL YOU IT'S LIKE FISH WITH A DASH OF CHICKEN.
AND HOW EXACTLY DO *YOU* KNOW THAT?
THAT, MY FRIEND, IS A STORY FOR *ANOTHER* DAY.
END.

A new tale spun next month...

the Worm of Lambton

story and art by Nathan Pride

Son of the Serpent

story and art by Daniel Bayliss

script by Fabian Rangel Jr.

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The StoryTeller

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